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NEW AGE

Vol. VI — JUNE 1939 — No. 1

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THE NEW AGE

THE REGISTRAR OF BOOKS ... JUL 1939 MADRAS

THE CRISIS DEEPENS

With lightning rapidity events have moved since the fateful 29th of January when the Presidential election took place and to-day we are faced with a situation of extreme seriousness and gravity. No longer is it possible to shut our eyes to realities, no longer can any Congressman—whatever be his affiliations—look upon the developments complacently with the hope that somehow or other the tangle would be solved, misunderstandings removed and unity maintained, with the hope that the present period of drift and retreat would soon end and the nation given marching orders. Whatever basis for such hopes existed they have now been smashed. And if the nation is not to find itself disunited and unprepared when the crisis comes, if the Congress is to fulfil its historic role of achieving national freedom, it is time that realities are faced and the basic causes of our present weakness and disunity removed.

Maturing War-Crisis

The war-crisis dominates the situation. With the distruction of Spanish Independence, with the annihilation of Czechoslovakia, with British Imperialism abetting Nazi and Fascist aggression till the Axis powers have attained immence strength and dominating positions in Central and Southern Europe, the danger of war has increased a thousandfold. The armament race is fast approaching its final and decisive phase. The second imperialist war, as Stalin points out in his Report to the 18th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, has already begun. It is now only a question of months—or may be weeks—for a world conflagration to start.

The Decisive Question

In the background of this fast-maturing war crisis the recent development in the Congress and the country—developments that conclusively and overwhelmingly prove the disruptive character of the present policy of our national leadership—acquire tremendous importance. Shall the Congress—because of the attempts of the national leadership to pursue a more and more anti-popular and anti-struggle line and because of the ever-sharpening internal conflict that such attempt must result in—go to pieces and be unable to meet the war-crisis or shall we achieve internal unity and foil imperialist attempts to drag us into war—this is the question that the present situation poses. On the answer to this question depends the fate of our nation.

Never was the situation so critical, never the possibilities of complete victory and also the danger of utter defeat, so great. Whether our efforts are crowned with success in the near future and the shackles of slavery broken or whether a glorious opportunity is

wasted depend entirely on the policy that we adopt to-day.

Imperialist Strategy

What that policy must be, has to be determined with full consciousness of the present strategy of British Imperialism in relation to India. The strain of war-measures is forcing imperialism to shift the burden more on the Indian people. The Indo-British Trade Pact which was ratified in spite of the adverse verdict of the Central Legislature, the enhancement of the import duty on Cotton, the persistent refusal to grant protection to growing industries, are only a few instances. Simultaneously with this offensive in the economic field, new chains of slavery are being forged and every effort is being made to overcome Princely opposition to the Federation by more and more concessions, the scanty powers that provincial Ministries enjoy to-day are being sought to be restricted in order that Britain's war-machine may function without hindrance. The rapid mechanisation of the Indian Army, the move to establish gun factories in India, the plan to convert India into Britain's war base for the entire Middle and Far East, the war Amendment to the Government of India Act, are all parts of Britain's war plan. All these mean a general offensive against the entire Indian people on all fronts—Political and Economic.

At the same time Imperialism is fully conscious of the need for Indian "co-operation." While the needs of war drive Imperialism into conflict with Indian national interests, this very need also forces it to make gestures of conciliation—gestures which are however empty because imperialism cannot afford to-day to make any vital concession—political or economic. Imperialism wants conciliation with our national leaders *but at its own price*—without foregoing its autocratic powers, without sacrificing the interests of British Finance Capital, without alienating the Princes and other reactionary vested interests that constitute its main props.

Has the Lesson been Learnt ?

Can we say that the line that our national leadership is following is such as would defeat the strategy of imperialism and frustrate imperialist plans to drag India into a war ? Are our leaders conscious that imperialism, to-day cannot make any vital concessions—any concessions that cut across its own political and economic interests—cannot destroy its own base and alienate the Princes by acting as the champion of the States people, cannot weaken its offensive against the people as a whole, cannot give up the game of instigating communalist disruption and that therefore all hopes of gradual transfer of power have to be given up and the nation prepared for struggle ?

If this consciousness, this perspective determined the policy of our national leadership the history of the last one year and particularly of the months following the Presidential Election, would have been radically different, the struggle of the States People would have been strengthened, the internal crisis of the Congress solved in a manner which would have strengthened the national movement as a whole, and the Congress would have achieved complete internal unity and become powerful enough to take full advantage of the impending war crisis.

Tripuri and Calcutta

That did not happen. Subhas Bose's Election was followed by the resignation

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of the Working Committee members and Gandhiji's statement "It is my defeat" —a statement which was in fact a declaration of war. What was in reality the rank and file verdict against the policy of drift, against the suppression of working class, peasant and popular struggles in the name of truth and non-violence, the rank and file protest against the destruction of internal democracy of the Congress, was interpreted as lack of confidence in Gandhiji and in the Old Guard, as repudiation of the fundamental principles of the Congress. Helped to a certain extent by some "Leftists" who too raised slogans of "alternative leadership," the compromisers at Tripuri sidetracked the main political and organisational issues, posed Gandhiji against Subhas and prepared the basis for complete organisational domination in the Congress.

What happened at Calcutta was not an accident, nor the result of "misunderstanding" in the Working Committee. The obduracy, the cussedness on the part of the Right Wing leaders, the insistence on a homogeneous Working Committee" were not born of a false sense of "prestige" as some comrades seem to think. Nor did Subhas Bose, Jawaharlal, Jaiprakash Narayan and the major section of the Left plead for a united Working Committee, for a Composite Cabinet, only because they wanted more Left members in the Working Committee. The differences were deeper.

Political reasons—*two entirely different perspectives—lay at the root of the difference that manifested themselves at Tripuri and at Calcutta. The slogan of homogeneous Cabinet was counterposed to that of composite Cabinet because the dominant section of our national leadership had an entirely different notion of unity from what Bose and Nehru had. In contrast with the latter who thought in terms of struggle and wanted unity for launching struggle, the Right wing leaders too wanted unity but for a different purpose and with different perspective.*

Power Without Struggle

That perspective rules out struggle and is based on the illusion that power can pass into the hands of the people gradually and without struggle. The Right Wing point of view was expressed by Sardar Patel in a speech delivered shortly after the A.I.C.C. session.

"Discord and disharmony may prove our undoing. That is why Mahatma Gandhi has been saying that the Working Committee of the Congress......must be homogeneous both in spirit and action."

"If we work our machine in the right spirit and manner we shall be able to conquer power even without struggle."

The very heart of reformism is laid bare in these statements, the real meaning of the slogan of homogeneous Cabinet —its political content—becomes crystal clear. In view of the imminence of the war-crisis, in view of the certainty that imperialism shall strive to drag India into war, "power without struggle" can only mean compromise with imperialism. And in order that this line may be carried out, in order that no rift takes place in the supreme Executive of the Congress in the period of the crisis, in order that maximum pressure may be brought on imperialism as a part of the bargaining policy—a homogeneous cabinet is a necessity. This perspective determined the Right wing line at Tripuri and Calcutta. A homogeneous Cabinet was established, the elected a President was forced to

resign, in order that the anti-struggle line might be pursued without hindrance in order that the rank and file verdict in the presidential election might be reversed, in order that the Congress will be transformed into an instrument —not for nation-wide struggle as the National Demand resolution demanded but for bringing pressure on imperialism for bargaining with it. This line *demands liquidation* of even the existing struggles. No wonder that the British Imperialist Press hailed the Calcutta verdict with joy, no wonder Zamindars of U. P. and Behar breathed a sigh of relief.

Retreat on the State Front

What the logical implication of this line is, can be seen most clearly in the development on the states people's front. The year 1938 saw the entry of 80 million states people in the political arena. Princely autocraey, one of the mightiest pillars of imperialism, was shaken up to its very foundation; undreamt of possibilities opened up for an all-embracing, nation-wide offensive against imperialism. Kashmir, Travancore, Mysore, Dhenkenal became storm centres of popular struggle. And when crisis over the happenings in Rajkot and Jaipur seemed imminent, the nation waited with bated breath for the marching order—joyfully hoping that the period of drift and retreat had come to an end, that the entire might of the Congress would be hurled against imperialism.

Then came in rapid succession Gandhiji's Rajkot fast, the assurance by the Viceroy, the Viceroy's advice to the Princes "to put their houses in order" and Gandhiji's halting orders. Precisely at the moment when the movement had attained greater strength than ever before, when Princely autocracy was hardest pressed, Gandhiji ordered the people to beat a retreat. The specious pleas that were advanced for this unprecedented slip were that "the princes were themselves agitated over the awakening of the people, that they should be given breathing time and that the Viceroy's message to the Princes should be allowed to work itself."

Autocracy Launches Counter-Offensive

How the Princes viewed the suspension how they wanted to utilise the "breathing space," were immediately seen. Relieved from popular pressure they organised the forces of disruption and launched the counter-offensive. Communalists were encouraged and popular ranks were divided, people were deliberately provoked into acts of violence, terror was continued. Ramdurg and Gangapur witnessed mass shooting of unarmed peasants, in Cutch the national Flag was burnt, thousands were forced to flee from Limbdi to escape the terror, in Travancore and Bhavanagar hooligans were encouraged to break popular meetings and demonstrations. In Jaipur inspite of the withdrawal of struggle, Seth Jamnalal Bajaj and other political workers were kept in prison and subjected to in human treatment—in brief almost in every state repression was intensified. Above all, in Rajkot Gandhiji was completely outmanoeuvred. Autocracy which had been forced to retreat before the united might of the people returned to the attack, organised communalist disruptors and used the fruit of people's struggle—the Gwyer Award—to defeat Gandhiji.

In the face of this counter-offensive our national leadership retreated step by

step, Victory was turned into defeat and defeat was sought to be covered up by sanctimonious phrases about "change of heart," truth and non-violence. The inexorable logic of the policy of compromise worked itself out, the accredited leader of the nation was beaten down to his knees by a petty Princeling.

The Offensive Reaction

It is not on the States People's front alone that reaction has been on the offensive. Gandhiji's attempts to secure the release of Bengal political prisoners by means of negotiation have failed and the failure officially recognised by the Congress. In the Punjab hundreds of peasants are being thrown into prison for agitating against increase in revenue. In Bengal the reationary Huq Government by means of the Municipal Amendment Bill is attempting to fan up communal passions and ensure reactionary domination over the Calcutta Corporation. Communal riots are breaking out on large scale in U. P., Behar, Bombay—all Congress Provinces—and it is obvious to all that they are part of a general attack on the Congress and its Ministries. The Bombay and Cawnpore Mill owners are attempting to nullify the wage increase which the Congress Ministry, backed up by the people, had forced them to concede. The brutal firing on unarmed workers at Digboi, a firing that was universally condemned by the Congressmen of Assam, was upheld by the Magistrate who conducted the enquiry and the European owners frustrated every attempt of the Congress Ministry to negotiate a settlement with the strikers. Hundreds of peasants are being ejected from their land in favour of the landlords with the direct support of the Frontier Congress Government and for organising opposition to this, scores of Red Shirts including Obeidullah, the son of the Frontier Premier, have been thrown in Prison. Disciplinary action by the Congress has followed and they have been removed from their offices in the Congress.

As in States, this offensive of reaction is not being met with by the people's counter offensive. Everywhere the line of compromise is being followed on every front; the dominant policy is that of retreat. The growing offensive against the Left, the offensive that is taking the form of "purification" of the Congress, of disciplinary measures and of distruction of democracy in the Congress, is the necessary counterpart of the compromising policy.

Homogenous Working Committee is to be followed by an A.I.C.C. packed with supporters of the present leadership. Proportional representation is to be done away with. The internal democracy of the Congress is to be severly restricted in order that the rank and file discontent may be easily smothered by the application of disciplinary measures from the top. That is the meaning of the new amendments to the Congress Constitution that are sought to be introduced in the near future.

The Forward Bloc

Inability on the part of the Left to turn the tide, to win over the majority of the Congressmen definitely and decisively for the policy of struggle, inability to defeat the disruptive policy of the Right wing, inevitably creates a situation in which Left adventurism thrives, in which slogans of "Down with Gandhism" and of "alternative leadership" evoke response and unscrupulous elements get the opportunity to utilise the discontent of the rank and file for factional struggle against the Right

wing, or to be more correct, against the existing leadership.

It is in this background—the impending menace of war, the growing offensive of reaction, the anti-struggle and therefore anti-unity line of our national leadership, the drive against the Left, the growth of Left-adventurism—that the post-Calcutta developments in the Congress have to be analysed. The emergence of the Forward Bloc with Subhas Bose at its head is a factor of extreme significance and importance. The fact that this bloc—admittedly a product of Left discontent—is led by the ex-President, emphasies the depth of the crisis in the national leadership and gives the Bloc an importance and attracting power which it otherwise would not have. Already large number of left Congressmen have hailed the Bloc and in the Punjab and U. P. the preliminary steps for forming it have been taken. According to Bose "the two-fold task of the Forward Bloc shall be—

> Firstly to instil life and revolutionary impulse in the existing programme of the Congress and secondly to prepare the country for the coming struggle through an advance radical programme."

The Bloc stands for struggle, for uncompromising opposition to the Federation and war, for close relationship of the Congress with workers' and peasants' organisations, for direct leadership of the Congress in states People's movements, for the creation of a national volunter corps, for rapid implementing of the Congress programme by the Ministries. Its programme therefore is identical with the immediate programme of Communists and Socialists.

The Danger

Nevertheless the heterogenous composition of the Bloc, the existence of a number of persons in it who can by no stretch of imagination be called Left but who are only disgruntled Right wingers, the absence of ideological homogeniety are factors which render it not unlikely that the Bloc may tend to become only factional consolidation against the present leadership, utilising every deviation, every mistake, every anti-struggle and anti-unity act of the present leadership in order to discredit it. That will deepen the internal crisis, weaken the Congress and the unity that it has achieved.

This is not an unfounded apprehension. A recent speech of Bose himself in which he said that "split may be necessary" shows the extent of the danger which the Congress and the national movement are faced with as a result of the recent developments. The Forward Bloc is essentially a left nationalist body and as such a healthy development. But not to realise, that the desperation and sense of frustration produced in the Left camp by Right obduracy may flow into disruptive channels, would be blinding ourselves.

Unite the Left

Our national movement has reached an extremely critical stage. Never was the need for unity greater and never too the danger of disruption greater. That unity can be achieved, that danger averted only if the entire Left unite and use its strength—which is far greater to-day than ever before—not to wage factional struggle against the Right or to advocate a suicidal split, but to defeat the policy of drift and disruption, to mobilise support of the Congress organi-

sations and masses for the partial struggles of workers and peasants in defence of their economic and political rights, to organise vigorous agitation in the Congress organisations particularly among the primary members for support to the States People's and against suspension of their movement, to create mass opinion in favour of the anti-war policy of the Congress so that that policy may be actually *carried out* when the crisis comes, to mobilise widest support for purification of the Congress without weakening its mass basis—in brief to fight for the policy of unity and struggle concretely and positively and on a political plane by developing mass political consciousness, by making the issues of the day *live* to millions of Congressmen.

And for achieving this unity the Socialists, Communists and the Forward Bloc and other radicals must immediately meet and chalk out a common plan of action by mutual agreement. In order that this unity may be really effective the major political and organisational slogans and the approach to the burning problems of the day must be common. Maintenance of the unity of the Congress and its strengthening as the organ of the united people's movement must be the basic task of the United Left. And in order that disruption may not develop in the Left camp itself, it is absolutely necessary that one section does not try to gain at the expense of the other, that all agreements are voluntary and strictly adhered to, that the Parties to Left unity may maintain their independence and integrity.

These are the immediate tasks to-day. In the measure we fulfil these tasks we shall be able to prevent disruption, to prevent compromise on the issue of war, strengthen the Congress and take the nation forward.

ROY AND CLASS ORGANISATIONS

By A. K. Ghosh

On the role of class organisations in the National liberation movement, Roy has shifted his position more than once. His present position may be summed up as follows:

(1) The National Congress is the People's Party for waging the *political* battle, for achieving the immediate *political* objective—National freedom. The National Revolution must be at the same time an agrarian revolution because the feudal elements living on pre-capitalist forms of exploitation constitute integral parts of the imperialist structure.

(2) The peasantry constitutes the overwhelming section of the people. Its sectional interest coincides with the national interest—overthrow of imperialism and abolition of a feudal system of exploitation. Therefore the Congress must be, above all, a peasant organisation. Hence independent peasant organisations are not only useless but, distinctly harmful; they split the peasantry and create divided loyalty.

"Peasant organisations cannot exist without becoming rivals to the Congress."

(3) Roy is less harsh towards the trade unions. He admits that for winning their class demands the workers need their own organisations. These demands however are of an economic character. The immediate *political demands* of Indian workers, are the same as those of other sections of the people, i.e., they are of a national and not specifically proletarian character. The struggle for them must be waged not by sectional organisations like Trade Unions but by the national organisation —The Congress. The trade unions must be strictly economic organisations; they must not *initiate* any political struggle; they must not launch any political action independent of the Congress.

(4) Collective affiliation of trade unions would make the Congress a loose Federation. The Congress is the People's *Party* and not a United Front. Therefore its membership must be individual.

Wrong Defence of Kisan Sabhas

Sometimes attempts are made to reply to the arguments of Roy in an abstract and definitely harmful manner. It is argued that being a political organisation of all classes that stand for freedom, the Congress *cannot* fight for the sectional demands of the peasants. Hence the peasants need Kisan Sabhas.

This really speaking is the argument of the Right Wing. The only difference is that the Right Wing uses this argument *against* Congress participation in peasant movements, the Left uses it *for* justifying the existence of Kisan Sabhas. But used in either way it is a false argument.

There can be no non-class 'national' struggle. What the Left demands, what the anti-imperialist movement itself demands, is *greater* participation of the Congress in the peasant movement, *greater* identification of the Congress with each and every struggle of the toilers. It was the rising tide of the peasant movement and pressure of the Left that made the Congress adopt an advanced agrarian programme at Faizpur. Shall the Left now say, "The congress *must not fight* to achieve this programme because it is a national organisation? Do we not on the contrary applaud the action of the U. P. Congress Committee that called upon the peasants to mobilise in support of the Agrarian Bill which is aimed *against* the landlords? Did we not endorse the action of the Cawnpur Congress Committee that identified itself with the Workers' General Strike and took disciplinary action against its own capitalist Vice-President for not helping the strikers? If we maintain that because of its *national* political character, the Congress *cannot* support workers' and peasants' economic demands why do we call upon the Congress *to fight* for these demands?

How then do we justify the formation and strengthening of Kisan Sabhas and at the same time advocate greater identification of the Congress with the Kisan movement?

The Two Lines

We entirely agree with Roy that the peasant movement must become an integral part of the national liberation struggle. How to bring about this development?

Roy advocates the liquidation of Kisan Sabhas for achieving this object.

(*Continued on Page 559*)

THE PROBLEM OF MARXISM

A Guide to the Study of Marx's "Capital"

By J. Alpari

[In our March issue we published the first article by J. Alpari on the "Introduction to the study of Marx's CAPITAL". In the second article, which we publish below he deals with it at length and gives a further insight and guide to the proper understanding of CAPITAL.—*Ed.*]

The Development of the Form of Value

In this article "On the Question of Dialectics", Lenin gave an example of how dialectics should be presented, to the Marxist method of *Capital.* This brief characterisation is already an exceedingly valuable aid to the study of *Capital.* Lenin writes:

> "In *Capital*, Marx in the first place analyses the most simple, ordinary, typical, everyday *relation*, which can be observed a thousand times, of bourgeois commodity society: exchange of commodities. The analysis lays bare in this simple phenomenon (in this 'cell' of bourgeois society) all the contradictions (or the germ of *all* contradictions) of modern society. The further presentation shows us the development (growth and *also* movement) of these contradictions and of this society in the sum of its fundamental constituent parts, right from its beginning to its end."

The learned men of the Second International have continually complained that Marx did not develop his economic teachings within the frame-work of a history of economy. We shall see that the first chapter of *Capital* contains already a brief history of economy, it is true, only a logical development, "stripped," as Engels says, "of zig-zags and of the disturbing accidents of the historical process."

Marx does not, however, place the history of economy at the head of his work. "Our investigation must therefore begin with the analysis of a commodity," says Marx in the first paragraph of *Capital*. Marx does in fact proceed from the cell form of bourgeois society.

"That must be the method of presentation" said Lenin in the above-mentioned article. In choosing this scientific method, Marx reveals already in the simplest exchange-relations all the contradictions of modern society.

Exchange relations presuppose a definite social form of labour products. The tallow candle, which the peasant woman makes for the family use, is consumed in the family, does not come into exchange relations with other products of labour. Where products of labour regularly reach the consumer indirectly by way of exchange or purchase (purchase is also only a form of exchange, namely money for commodities) there commodity production prevails. The Commodity has a use-value, otherwise it would never be demanded in exchange; but it has in addition an exchange-value

As a commodity it is produced for exchange.

"Use-values......constitute the substance of all wealth, whatever may be the social form of that wealth. In the form of society we are about to consider, they are, in addition, the material depositories of exchange value," says Marx.

Marx presents this thought in a somewhat different way in his "Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy."

"One cannot tell by the taste of wheat whether it has been raised by a Russian serf, a French peasant or an English capitalist.......Use-values do not bear any marks of the relations of social production."

Where the products of labour appear as exchange-values, there we have at the same time a definition of the *social relation* under which they were produced. They arose from *commodity production.*

Here use-value has only the role of being the depository of exchange value.

One must sharply distinguish between use-value and exchange-value. Nearly all the misunderstandings and deliberate confusion of the bourgeois professors arise from the mixing together of these two catagories. Use-value is a necessary condition of exchange, but it does not determine exchange-value, and certainly not the amount of exchange-value. Exchange-value is indifferent towards use-value and pays no regard to it. Marx gives some striking examples of this in his "Critique of Political Economy."

> "A volume of Propercius (a romantic poet highly esteemed by Goethe) and eight ounces of snuff may have the same exchange-value in spite of the disparity between the use-values of tobacco and elegy."

Here we find also the oft-quoted passage:

> "The exchange value of a palace can be expressed in a certain number of tins of blacking. London blacking manufacturers have, vice versa, expressed the exchange-value of their numerous tins in palaces.

Marx develops this idea in much greater detail in *Capital*, employing other examples and arrives at the result:

> "As use-values, commodities are, above all, of different qualities, but as exchange-values they are merely different quantities, and consequently do not contain an atom of use-value.

After having, in another connection, in *Capital*, on Fetishism of Commodities, brought to a conclusion his treatment of the difference between use-value and exchange-value, Marx states;

> "Since exchange-value is a definite social manner of expressing the amount of labour bestowed upon an object, Nature has no more to do with it, than it has in the fixing of the course of exchange."

It is a definite skilled work (tailoring, shoemaking) which converts commodities into use-values.

> "If we make abstraction from its use-value, we make abstraction at the same time from the material elements and shapes that make the product a use-value; we see it no longer a table, a house, yarn or any other useful thing. Its existence as a material thing is put out of sight. Neither can it any longer be regarded as the product of the labour of the joiner, the mason, the spinner, or any other kind of definite productive labour. Along with the useful qualities of the products themselves, we put out of sight both the useful character of the various kinds of labour embodied in them, and the concrete forms of that labour; there is nothing left but what is common to them all; all are reduced

to one and the same sort of labour, human labour in the abstract."

In order to explain this idea, the following passages may be quoted from the "Critique of Political Economy," which deals here with the same subject but in a different manner:

"In order to measure the exchange-value of commodities by the labour time embodied in them, the different kinds of labour must be reduced to uniform, homogeneous, simple labour, in short, to labour which is qualitatively the same, and, therefore, differs only in quantity."

"It matters as little in the case of labour whether it be embodied in gold, iron, wheat, or silk, as it does in the case of oxygen, whether it appears in the rust of iron, in the atmoshpere, in the juice of a grape, or in the blood of a human being."

"This reduction appears to be an abstraction; but it is an abstraction which takes place daily in the social process of production."

"This abstraction of human labour, in general, virtually exists in the average labour, which the average individual of a given society can perform—a certain productive expenditure of human muscles, nerves, brain, etc. It is *unskilled* labour to which the average individual can be put and which he has to perform in one way or another."

In Marx's time gold was mined with the most primitive means, and therefore it contained only unskilled labour. And this product of unskilled labour, in which, was embodied only the most unskilled human labour, average human labour, became gold-money, in which all commodities were estimated, or measured. The abstraction of human labour from every *special* quality is realised, among other things, also in the most valuable of the commodities, in gold; it is, or it was, the product of the most unskilled labour.

Marx develops this thought further:

"A use-value, or useful article, therefore, has value only because human labour in the abstract has been embodied or materialised in it. How, then, is the magnitude of this value to be measured? Plainly, by the quantity of the value-creating substance, the labour, contained in the article. The quantity of labour, however, is measured by its duration, and labour-time in its turn finds its standard in weeks, days and hours.

"Some people might think that if the value of a commodity is determined by the quantity of labour spent on it, the more idle and unskilled the labourer, the more valuable would his commodity be, because more time would be required in its production. The labour, however, that forms the substance of value, is homogeneous human labour, expenditure of one uniform labour-power. The total labour-power of society, which is embodied in the sum total of the value of all commodities produced by that society, counts here as one homogeneous mass of human labour-power, composed though it be of innumerable individual units. Each of these units is the same as any other, so far as it has the character of the average labour-power of society, and takes effect as such, that is, so far as it requires for producing a commodity, no more time than is needed on an average, no more than is socially necessary. The labour-time socially necessary is that required to produce an article under the normal conditions of production, and with the average degree of skill and intensity prevalent at the time."

These are some of the most essential passages in *Capital* in which Marx sums up his theory of value.

Let us call to mind what Marx says in his letter to Kugelmann. Even if he had not written a special chapter on "Value", he says there, his analysis of the real relationships would contain the proof and demonstration of the real value relation. In fact Marx shows that

the production of commodities is a relation of social production, where social labour must be distributed in definite proportions. *A priori* there does not take place any conscious social regulations of production. The reasonable and the necessary in nature asserts itself only as a blindly working average, in that every individual labour must prove to be a proportional part of the total social-labour, and only thus constitutes an exchange-value. An analysis of the social-labour in the production of commodities, and not an analysis of the commodity, therefore, leads us to an understanding of exchange-value, which is nothing else but the proportionate part of the total social labour contained in the commodity.

Marx then, however, proceeds from the commodity, and by a sharp analysis comes to the definition of exchange-value.

One of the bitterest opponents of the Marxist theory of value was Professor Sybel. He was one of the first critics of *Capital* but he nevertheless admitted:

> "Marx's arguments are in the highest degree concise and conclusive; whoever accepts his premises is irresistibly compelled to recognise the final conclusions."

Sybel's criticism arises from the fact that he confuses exchange-value and use-value. He writes:

> "The buyer does not ask how much time it has cost to produce a commodity, but whether its consumption, by satisfying his need, imparts to him a corresponding quantity of vital force. The value of coal increases in winter, because more coal is needed for the production of bodily warmth."

To which Dietzgen aptly reply:

> If in Russia (where coal was to be had at half price compared with Germany) a ton of coal is produced in half the time, that is to say, if the coalmines there yield so much more than in the south (Germany), than the value of the coal there, or its average price, will be only half as much, although the winter may be twice as cold and twice as long."

To all similer objections, however, Marx replied himself. If the utility, that is to say the use-value determines the amount of the exchange-value, how is one to explain the difference between the value of bread and diamonds? Here only the labour theory of value can provide a correct explanation.

> "Diamonds are of very rare occurence on the earth's surface, and hence their discovery costs, on an *average*, a great deal of labour-time. Consequently much labour is represented in a small compass. *Jacobs* doubts whether gold has ever been paid for at its full value. This applies still more to diamonds. According to *Eschwege*, the total produce of the Brazilian diamond mines for the eighty years, ending in 1823, had not realised the price of one-and a-half years' average produce of the sugar and coffee plantations of the same country, although the diamonds cost much more labour, and therefore represented more value. With richer mines, the same quantity of labour would fall. If we could succeed at a small expenditure of labour, in converting carbon into diamonds, their value might fall below that of bricks."

* * *

Marx points out the dialectical opposition both in the commodity and in exchange-value.

He speaks of the two factors of a commodity—use-value and exchange-value—and of the two-fold nature of the labour contained in commodities viz., concrete individual labour, which determines the use-value, and abstract social labour, which determines the exchange-value. This revelation of the opposite sides of

one and the same commodity is of tremendous practical importance. If the productive power is increased, then instead of one coat, two coats can be produced in *the same* time. The material wealth will increase. But at the same time the exchange-value falls. For, if two coats can be produced in the same time (assuming that the productivity is the same in all the labour processes in question) as formerly it took to produce one coat, then the two are worth only as much as the one was before. The two-fold character of labour produces an antagonistic movement.

In exchange-value there are likewise two opposite sides. Individual labour and social labour confront each other, that is to say, individual labour must assume the character of social labour. This contrast has an even greater practical importance. Because, in the process of exchange, *individual labour* must prove to be social labour, i.e., has value only in so far as it contains really necessary social labour, there arises out of this contradiction a whole number of social convulsions through so-called depreciations or over-appreciations on a national and international scale.

> "If the market cannot stomach the whole quantity (of linen) at the normal price of 2 shillings a yard, this proves that too great a portion of the total labour of the community has been expended in the form of weaving. The effect is the same as if each individual weaver had expended more labour time upon his particular product than is socially necessary. Here we may say with the German proverb: "caught together, hung together."

* * *

The form of value does not appear in the individual commodity. "Turn and examine a single commodity, by itself, as we will," says Marx, "yet in so far as it remains an object of value, it seems impossible to grasp it." Marx therefore proceeds to an analysis of exchange, when *two* commodities confront each other. Here there is first fully unfolded the play of dialectical opposites which are inherent in the products of human labour as soon as they assume the form of commodities.

* * *

Two commodities are to be exchanged for one another—let us say 20 yards of linen for one coat. There results the equation: 20 yards of linen, is equal to, one coat. The question implies that there must be contained in them something common which is different from their bodily form, for only thus can there be a common measure for them. One cannot had together five cups and four plates. If, however, we disregard their special qualities and consider only what is common to them, that they are pieces of crockery, then they are commensurable and one can say, five cups and four plates added together make nine pieces of crockery. What is common in linen and a coat is the exchange value contained in them, the same human labour embodied in the linen and coat are in the given example, perfectly equal to one another, but in exchange relations they play different parts. The linen in which that value is expressed, the value of the linen is related to the coat; it appears as its relative value, and we thus have before us the relative form of value. The coat officiates as equivalent or appears in equivalent form. Both forms belong to each other, but they stand in opposition to each other.

> "The relative-value form and the equivalent form are two intimately connected, mutually dependent and

> inseparable elements of the expression of value; but at the same time are *mutually exclusive, antagonistic extremes*—i.e., *poles of the same expression. They are allotted* respectively to the *two different* commodities brought into relation by that expression. It is not possible to express the value of linen in linen—*20 yards of linen*, is equal to, *20 yards of linen is no expression of value*.......The value of the linen can therefore be expressed only *relatively* i.e., in some *other* commodity. The *relative form of value* of the linen presupposes therefore, the presence of *some other commoditg*—here the coat—under the form of an equivalent."

Marx describes this equivalent form as a mirror of value in which the value is reflected, and the special bodily form of the commodity recedes more and more into the back-ground. To this expression he adds the following brilliant remark:

> "In a sort of way, it is with man as with commodities. Since he came into the world neither with looking glass in his hand, nor as a Fichtian philosopher, to whom 'I am I' is sufficient, man first sees and recognises himself in other men. Peter only establishes his own identity as a man by first comparing himself with Paul as being of like kind. And thereby Paul, just as he stands in his Pauline personality, becomes to Peter the type of the *genus homo*."

This remark contains a profound philosophic idea. For us it is important in the first place as an elucidation of the concept of value. The comparison is a striking one. In order to be able to speak of man, I must disregard the special qualities of man, the qualities of the individual person. Whether child or adult, man or woman, Christan or Jew, German or Frenchman, black or white—all belong to the human race. The case is similar with regard to value. It is not a question of joinery, tailoring, or weaving, but only *general* labour, which is contained in all commodities.

Like the comparison: individual and man as genus, so is the comparison linen as individual commodity with the coat as the expression of value, in which what is common to them both, value, finds expression.

Accordingly, the dialectical contradictions of exchange-value are most clearly apparent in the equivalent form, which Marx then also develops in detail.

As we are not able in these articles to give the contents of *Capital*, but only wish some elucidations and hints to render easier its study, we must content ourselves with this simple reference. We would mention, however, that the advantages of the French edition of *Capital* were never so plainly apparent as in the development of the form of value. Marx himself, already in the first German edition, pointed out that the German *wertsein*, to be worth, expresses in less striking manner than the Romance verbs *valere, valer, Valoir*, that the equating of commodity B to commodity A, is commodity A's own mode of expressing its value. He uses here as an example the well-known saying: *Paris vaut bien une mess*—Paris is worth a mass—the placing of Paris on the same level or value as a mass, being much more pregnant in the French original than in the German translation.

But it is not a question of a word. The presentation of the value form is full of exact and precise shadings. Marx made use of the clear cohesion and logical construction of the French sentence in order to produce also from the purely *stylistic* stand-point a work which neither *Voltaire* nor *Diderot*, these great

masters of French philosophic prose literature, ever approached.

For the reader with some dialectical training, and possessing diligence and perseverance, these arguments in the French edition give the greatest pleasure.

The form of value in which two individual commodities confront one another, Marx calls the simple individual or chance accidental form, dates far back in human history. Already in the stone age tribes came together in order to exchange certain products with each other. The one had some superfluous salt, the other a superfluous stone axe, and exchanged the one for the other. In the equation—a certain quantity of salt, is equal to, one stone axe—there is the first value form, beyond which man does not go for centuries, even if the products of labour to be exchanged change. Nomadic tribes exchange furs for weapons, coloured cloths for draught animals. Here exchange-value appears as something accidental, independent of the labour contained in the commodity. In reality, however, we know that the labour which was necessary to produce the commodity already played a decisive part in this primitive barter. Value was a measure of labour.

The logical development of the value form by Marx reflects a great span of real historical events.

Later on, exchange was no longer confined to various tribes which were alien to each other, but production of commodities spread more and more in the one and the same community. To use the example given by Marx: 20 yds. of linen is equal to, 1 coat, or is equal to, 10 lbs. of tea, or is equal to, 40 lbs. of coffee, or is equal to, 1 quarter of wheat, or is equal to 3 ounces of gold, or is equal to half a ton of iron. This form of exchange relation, where *one* commodity is exchanged for many other commodities, Marx calls the total or expanded form of value.

If 20 yards of linen exchange for one coat, if this form of value exists only accidentally, then the expression of value also appears only by accident. If however the one commodity stands in exchange relations with various other commodities again and again and in definite proportions, then here the value-expression is no longer a chance. The value of the linen represents a quite definite quantity, whether it is expressed in coffee or in wheat, in gold or in iron. The value can be recognised here as the same human labour expressed in various forms, in the coat, in iron, in wheat or in gold.

But here, too, there are a number of contradictions which entail exceedingly sharp social complications. As the commodities confront each other in their natural form, one private labour is confronted by another private labour, and the exchange only takes place if the owners encountering each other need their commodities in their natural form, the result may be somewhat as follows: A joiner goes to the market and seeks to exchange his product for flour. There comes a miller with flour to the market. He, however, wants wine for the product of his labour. There comes a vinegrower with wine, but wants to exchange his wine for linen. A linen-weaver comes along; he however wants to obtain a goat, and so on. There are commodities on the market; for every one of which there is a demand, but because they can oniy be exchanged in their natural form and the requirements do not mutually cover

each other in their natural form, no exchange can take place. The contradiction is solved however. In the course of development a single commodity becomes the expression of the value of all other commodities, the universal equivalent form, a commodity which everybody accepts even if he does not need it in its natural form but can always employ it as a means of exchange. One commodity becomes the equivalent form. This form of value, Marx calls, the general form of value and presents it in the following formula :

1 Coat	
10 lbs. of Tea	
40 lbs of Coffee	20 yards of
1 quarter of Wheat	Linen.
2 ounces of Gold	
½ ton of Iron, etc.	

This form corresponds perfectly with the money form, except that here linen takes the place of gold.

Gold, however, does not always function as money. In Tyrol for example, up to the 16th century, linen served as money. Those who have read *Stanley's* book, "*How I Found Livingstone*" know that when he went on his expedition to Central Africa he had to take with him a large quantity of wire, which there, up to the end of last century, served as money. A great historical development was necessary before precious metals took over the exclusive role of money.

In the money-form one of the main contraditions of commodity production is solved. Commodities represent values only insofar as they represent *general social* labour. That is what is common to them, and therefore they can be exchanged. But they appear in their opposite in the form of special labour (joinery work, tailoring work, etc.) In the course of development, however, one commodity, (linen, wire, gold) assumes the form of a general commodity, that is, a form which is independent of its use value, and in which, therefore, *general social labour* is most plainly apparent, without, however, losing the character of special labour. It is commodity and money.

> "Money is a crystal formed of *necessity* in the course of the exchanges, whereby different products of labour are practically equated to one another and thus by practice converted into commodities. The historical progress and extension of exchanges develops the contrast latent in commodities, between use-value and value. The necessity for giving an external expression to this contrast for the purposes of commercial intercourse, urges on the establishment of an *independent* form of value, and finds no rest until it is once for all satisfied by the differentiation of commodities into *commodities and money*. At the same rate, then, as the conversion of *products of labour into commodities* is being accomplished, so also is the conversion of one special *commodity into money.*"

With the development of the form of value from its most simple expression up to the money-form, Marx has accomplished a scientific achievement, which the bourgeois economists had not even ventured to tackle. The solution of the money riddle is one of the greatest theoretical achievements of political economy. Nobody until Marx had been able to give a correct explanation of money. *Lassale*, who was far in advance of the bourgeois economists of his time, wrote in the fifties of the last century, in his HERAKLIT :

> "Money itself can never be really consumed ; it *signifies* thereby only the products which can be exchanged for it and which, therefore, it only *represents*.
>
> "Money is quasi means of exchange, only the personified value the *obvious abstract unit* of production.

"That money is nothing *real* but is something only *ideal* is shown by the fact that money, or its value as such, can never really be consumed."

During the imperialist world-slaughter and since then, for instance, one had to visit the dentist. If one wanted one's false teeth repaired one had to part with the last hoarded piece of gold in order that it could be used for that purpose.

The Marxist theory of value, however, is of great practical importance. There has always been swindling and juggling with money; in our days more than formerly. In order to render this swindle easier, the learned men of the bourgeoisie put forward and still put forward appropriate theories of money. These theories are best refuted by the bankruptcy to which they lead. "Bankruptcy assumes the role of practical criticism." (Marx)

THE POPULAR FRONT IN FRANCE

By R. Michel

[This article although written before the fall of the Spanish Republic can yet be read with interest as it deals mostly with the General Theory and Practice of the Labour movement, with special reference to the Popular Front movement of France.—*Ed.*]

Since the shameful capitulation in Munich which lowered France in the eyes of the world the mass of the common people who were misled for the moment by the war scare of the September days have begun to realise all the implications of the betrayal for which they are made to pay the price. The ink of the "Settlement" had hardly time to dry when Hitler at Saarbrunken repeated with greater insolence than ever his war threats. No sooner had Hitler seized the Czech Maginot Line—and with it how many secrets of French defence?—Mussolini addressed to France most arrogant territorial demands.

On land and on sea, in Europe and in its colonies, France is now threatened by fascist encirclement. Were it not for the heroic struggle of the Spanish people who continue to pay with their blood for the cowardice of the so-called democratic Governments, the fascist ring around France would have been fully established by to-day.

But the working people of France have now to pass through another painful experience: the Daladier Government which betrayed the cause of peace is now attacking the livelihood and liberties of the French people. It is levelling its attacks on the achievements of the Popular Front.

* * *

The Popular Front is the mortal enemy of Fascism and the mortal enemy of the financial oligarchy. The world forces of reaction under the leadership of Fascism want to defeat the Popular Front and to abolish all the achievements it has secured for the masses. It is world reaction which demands the

abolition in France of the 5-day and 40-hour week, of collective agreements and holidays with pay, achievements which encouraged the workers throughout the world to fight for the same demands. It is world reaction headed by Fascism which is striving to break the alliance between the working class and peasants and the middle classes. An alliance which is the source of the strength and influence of France and carries the promise of victory of the progressive forces over the dark forces of Fascism and world reaction. "The victory of the Popular Front in France has changed the balance of forces in favour of peace and democracy," declared Maurice Thorez. It is in order to upset this balance that all the forces of reaction are unleashed to-day against the Popular Front.

The agent of these forces of reaction is Daladier.

In order to carry out its dirty work, reaction makes use of turncoats—a classic procedure, followed by the ruling class of all times and of all countries whenever its position is shaken.

Daladier may well change his colours but it was not he who "made" the Popular Front, and it is not he who can "unmake" it. The Popular Front was born from out of the French people themselves who, aroused to indignation by the horrors of Fascism, in 1934, showed to all the world that the victory of Fascism is not inevitable, that a united people can triumph over Fascism. And if to-day the reactionary gangs demand the suppression of the Communist Party it is because they cannot forgive its relentless struggle to convince the masses of the need for the united action of all the workers and all the people of France. And if to-day Daladier and his masters attack and insult the working class, it is because they cannot forget that the working class was the initiator of the struggle against war and Fascism.

It was the example of the working class in action which brought into action the peasants and middle classes. It was significant that the all-Paris Pilgrimage to the Place de la Republique, in February, 1935, was in response to the call of the Communist Party alone. This spontaneous demonstration of the Popular Front took place at the statue of the Republic on the first anniversary of the February days in honour of those proletarian heroes who gave their lives to save the Republic from Fascism in February, 1934.

As early as November 11, 1934, a demonstration of ex-servicemen was transformed into a real Popular Front demonstration when the victims of the imperialist slaughter of 1914-1918 demonstrated, without differences of parties or political opinion, in order to express their common hatred of war-mongering Fascism. Another magnificent symbol was the demonstration organised by the Communist Party in May, 1935, which was also transformed into a Popular Front demonstration, in honour of the heroes of the French Commune slaughtered by Teiers and Bismarck in alliance. The reactionaries of to-day are ready to renew this alliance with Hitler.

And then came the monster rally of the people on July 14, 1935, which gave a solemn pledge to fight against Fascism while the Red Flag and the Tricolour floated over it and the hymn of 1789, the Marseillaise, echoed everywhere.

On this day the mask was torn from the face of the financial oligarchy which had been posing as the sole defender of the traditions of 1789, and the France of the Popular Front showed itself to be the real defender and bearer of the great French revolutionary traditions.

A new France was born. A France which opened a new perspective of freedom to the working people of Germany and Italy groaning under the yoke of Fascism. A France which inspired the unity of the Spanish people and later also the people of China, two peoples who to-day teach us such noble lessons. A France whose example was an incentive to that feeling for unity which developed among the English people. The example of France evoked hope and sympathy in the hearts of the oppressed colonial people. Does Daladier imagine that the mighty demonstrations for France, with which the colonies answered the wordy threats of Mussolini, were for himself and the French reactionaries? They were for the France of the Popular Front!

The Radical and Radical Socialist Party which reflects the democratic aspirations of the peasants and middle classes and which is their traditional party, has often proclaimed as its guiding principle "no enemies on the left." This party has played an important part in the formation of the Popular Front. Its Congress in 1935 expressed in no uncertain way the growing feeling among the middle classes towards joint action with the working class. And when their speakers, in vigorous speeches showed how the interests of the financial oligarchy were clashing with those of France, they were only expressing what the mass of their rank and file members had already expressed in action, jointly with the working class. That is what forced Daladier himself to define the Popular Front as follows:

> "The Popular Front is the alliance between the Third Estate and the working class; when they are united they can repeat what happened in 1789, 1793, 1848 and the 4th of September (1870), when they are disunited they can be subject to another Thermidor, Brumaire or the 2nd of December (1851)."

And he then emphasised:

> "And when a people is reduced to slavery then comes a Waterloo or Sedan. When we loose liberty, we loose the peace and security of our fatherland."

We should also recall some other aspects of the situation. During the election of 1935 the Radical Party lost its traditional first place in the Chamber and it became clear to a number of radical leaders that the masses were demanding adhesion to the Popular Front. That adhesion became a question of life and death for the Radical Party. It was Jean Zay, the present Minister of Education (one of those ministers who were not invited to dine with Von Ribbentrop for fear of offending that gentleman's "Aryan" feelings) who declared then, that if the Radical Party does not respond to the people's expectations, "it will disappear without glory."

These people seem to have forgotten to-day all they understood at that time, although the situation to-day more than ever calls for the same thing. At that time they followed the masses who by their action brought the Popular Front into existence. To-day they want to forget all that, but the masses do not forget. It is that which makes us confident that the fate of the Popular Front does not depend on the will of

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this or that individual, on his loyalty to the Popular Front or his feelings.

There are leaders of the Radical Party who are seeking refuge in the camp of the 200 families whom they were so well able to expose in the past. Some of them have been hiding there for quite a time. Temporarily they succeeded in changing the balance of forces in the leadership of the Radical Party, but everything indicates that this balance of forces is not stable and already a number of radical leaders show that they are not going to allow themselves to be driven along the road of reaction. In this connection the voting on the Government's Finance Bill is very significant. The Popular Front put forward the slogan "make the rich pay." The Government declares "make the workers and the middle classes pay." It is against this that the masses are in revolt. That is why the Government could only scrape through with a majority of 7 in the voting on finance. The examination of the purely "radical" votes indicates that 77 supported the Government and 36 were in opposition or abstained. And who would dare to assume that two-thirds of the middle classes in the country, yes, even more, two-thirds of the Radical Party were prepared to shoulder the cost of the Munich Treaty signed by Daladier?

The eyes of many people have been opened during the three months which passed since Munich. There is a growing discontent among wide sections of the population against the emergency decrees and the policy of Munich. The basis for the Popular Front is broader than ever. The peasants whom Daladier led to believe that to save peace it was necessary to break the Popular Front are beginning to realise, when confronted with the war threats of Mussolini, that the Popular Front is actually the best guarantee of security for France faced with the unsatiable appetite of Fascism. A powerful movement is growing against the emergency decrees. It is becoming clear to the people of France that the Daladier-Reynaud policy is a policy of defence of the profits of the 200 families against the interests of the people of France and that it was in the name of these profit interests that Daladier let loose his police against the workers on November 30. Once again the workers have shown to the whole country how to fight. It is as a result of this fight that the amnesty has been granted and that there are now better chances for the Old Age Pensions Bill. The re-election of Jaques Duclos to the vice-presidency of the Chamber is a new indication of the change in the balance of progressive forces in favour of the Popular Front. It is sufficient to compare the Marseilles Congress with the Executive Committee meeting of the Radical Party, which took place recently, to gauge the distance travelled since then: while in Marseilles there was a tendency to glorify Munich, there is now a growing feeling for a change in foreign policy. The same applies to the attitude towards the Spanish Republic—shouts of "open the Spanish frontier" were heard at the so-called "small congress" of the radicals. Daladier himself who, at the Marseilles Congress had nothing but insults for the working class, all of a sudden remembered the need for an alliance between the working class and the Third Estate. At Marseilles Daladier succeeded in imposing a reactionary policy on the Radical Party. But he

cannot cover up the deep differentiation which has developed in recent years between the real radicals who are loyal to the traditional policy of alliance with the working class (Daladier himself is not one of them in spite of his speeches) on the one hand and on the other of the more or less disguised allies of reaction who up till now have followed the tide for fear of being swept away.

It is the radicals who go with Daladier who bear the heavy responsibility for becoming more or less the direct tools of the 200 families in their fight against the Popular Front. Defeated at the elections in 1936 the reactionaries have used these elements in their attempts to deprive the people of France of their liberties and achievements won in a hard battle, thanks to unity. Incapable of launching a frontal attack on a united people the reactionaries set themselves the task of taking these achievements back step by step. The more insolent the reactionaries became, the greater was the pressure, brought to bear by their allies in the Radical Party in order to prevent the fulfilment of the Popular Front programme. The big money interests exercised constant economic pressure: capital was exported abroad, the exchanges were manipulated, measures of economic reconstruction and national defence were sabotaged, the social laws and agreements concluded with unions systematically violated and at the same time the arming of the fascist leagues was speeded up. The dark forces of the financial oligarchy set themselves against the legal rights of the French people and opposed a government backed by a tremendous majority of the people. The Government, or rather the different successive Governments, had all means at their disposal to oppose this blackmail but to do so they had to put into action the forces and means at their disposal. Instead of that they met that blackmail and pressure with a policy of compromise and concessions; it is just this policy which enabled the reactionaries to realise their plan and recapture power step by step.

Instead of defending the achievements of the Popular Front and expending them to new strata of the population, a "truce" was agreed upon, a truce which proved a signal for an attack on the gains of the Popular Front. Instead of applying the programme "make the rich pay," a programme which would have hit at the money interests, the burden was put on the small people and the cost of living was increased. Instead of the political and military organisations of the fascists being dealt with ruthlessly, they were treated very mildly. The same policy of concession applied to foreign affairs: Hitler and Mussolini were left free to continue their attempts to strangle the Spanish Republic and in this way France was made to share the responsibility for the indiscribable sufferings of the Spanish people the invasion of Austria and the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia. All of these crimes endanger the security and independence of France itself.

In the course of these two years this policy of concessions has led to the Munich surrender and the "poverty" decrees of Daladier and Reynaud. The devil was given an inch and took an ell. It will need great strength to shake him off.

* * *

France, however, possesses this power. The French people possesses this power. This was shown by the mighty move-

ment of protest throughout the country against the "poverty" decrees. Daladier has decreed the death of the Popular Front, he always regarded it as a mere parliamentary arrangement, but the Popular Front is a living experience of the masses and neither Daladier nor the whole might of the 200 families can destroy this experience of tremendous historical importance.

The mainstay of the Popular Front is the united Comite General du Travail (French Trade Union Congress) whose formation was one of the essential factors in the creation of the Popular Front. It is an essential factor in the life of the whole country which has to be reckoned with. The C.G.T. has unanimously risen against the decrees. It has awakened the consciousness of the working people who demand a life worthy of human beings. It has rallied together all the main forces of democracy. It has taken the initiative of calling together a joint conference of the three powerful trade union organisations of France, Great Britain and the U.S.A.

But the strongest pillar of the Popular Front is the unity of the working class. This unity which was forged in the streets on February, 1934, in face of the fascist offensive has increased as a result of greater political clarity in the ranks of the Socialist Party, the increasing determination of the Socialist workers to fight against the poverty decrees, against the policy of concessions to Fascism, against the policy of Munich. It has increased because of the feeling for unity expressed by the majority at the Socialist Congress in Montrouge.

A working class enriched by experiences which strengthen unity, and capable of drawing lessons from the recent events will know how to rally the middle classes and how to revitalise and broaden the Popular Front.

THE NATURE OF FASCIST ECONOMY IN GERMANY

By Teutonicus

"You industrialists stand for the maintenance of private property, which is an aristocratic principle; but you have not yet made up your minds whether or not you are to oppose democracy. Make no mistake about it: If you do not destroy democracy it will do away with your rights and privileges; for the logical outcome of political equality in the economic sphere, i.e. communism, which has already conquered one-sixth of the earth and is spreading. You must give me political power, for I am the only man who with the help of the Nazi movement can crush democracy and all it stands for, and can restore Germany to that position which she enjoyed before the Great War, nay, to an even stronger one."—Adolph Hitler.*

Is Fascist economy a new form of capitalism? Is it a new stage in the development of capitalism such as is

* Speech to industrialists and Bankers of Westphalia on 27th January 1932.

imperialism as compared with 19th century capitalism? Has fascism done away with so many essentials of Capitalism that one could conclude, (although there are still many capitalist elements left in Germany) that society as a whole is no longer capitalistic? These and similar questions have come up again and again, and before speaking about conditions in Fascist Germany it is necessary to attempt to answer them.

Two things are essential in every capitalist society: first, that the means of production are privately owned (while production is social) everybody taking part in the process, which secures an increasing number of products to a decreasing number of individual owners of the means of production: second, that the leitomotiv, the economic incentive, is the quest for profits.

Fascist Economy In Germany

The first question we have to answer is, therefore, do these two characteristics apply to Fascist Germany and her economy? At first glance, these does not seem to be the case. How can one say that the quest for profits is the underlying motive for economic action among the ruling class if prices are state-regulated? How can one speak of private ownership of the means of production, if the distribution of raw materials is state-regulated, if foreign trade is state-regulated, if a considerable part of the home trade is state regulated, if crops have to be given upto the state, if the state builds factories and creates the largest iron ore mining undertaking in the country?

But let us recollect the historical development of capitalism. The period of liberal capitalism, of almost purely competitive capitalism was followed by a period of monopoly capitalism, when finance capital, i. e. combined monopoly industrial capital and monopoly bank capital, has achieved a preponderant position. The taxation system, the customs system, the banking system, the whole system of legislation, are changed in such a way as to favour more and more the development of trusts and combines. The economic freedom of the small capitalists is increasingly restricted. If, for instance, electricity prices are fixed so as to be lowest for the consumers of the greatest quantities, if transport rates are lowest for the senders of the greatest quantities or for the senders of specific industrial goods, then the economic freedom of the smaller employers or of certain industries is undoubtedly infringed upon. Under monopoly capitalism the non-monopolists are no longer in a position to draw full profits as they did formerly, because the monopolists realise super profits at their expense; non-monopolists have no longer the same freedom to use the means of production, custom duties for instance, being fixed in such a way as to discriminate against the raw materials which they need, transport charges being fixed in favour of the monopolies. Full freedom for all capitalists to use the means of production is therefore not an essential feature of capitalism; it was characteristic of a certain period of capitalism only.

Now let us look at conditions in fascist Germany. True, the distribution of raw materials, whether imported or produced at home, is regulated by the state. If we study the regulations and the actual distribution of raw materials, we find that one group of capitalists is especially favoured—the armament and semi-armament producers. The iron

and steel industry, the pure armament industries, the chemical industry producing in part armaments and in part civilian goods, the building and construction industry, producing in part armaments (barracks, military roads, aeroplanes, hangars etc.,) and in part civilian goods (dwellings)—these are the favoured industries. If we examine the kinds of commodities, which the state regulated imports bring into Germany, we find that they are chiefly commodities needed by the armament industries. If we investigate what kind of factories the state itself erects, we find, the state either erects or heavily subsidises factories, which produce raw materials either for direct use in the armament industry or for such civilian industries which are dependent upon importad raw materials —the idea being that the saving of import of raw materials for civilian industries would leave more foreign exchange for imports of armament raw materials.

The gigantic Hermann Goering Werke which produce iron ore represent nothing but a gigantic state subvention for the armament industry. They mine ore of such poor quality that the mining cannot be profitable; after they have been mined and transformed into pig iron the Hermann Goering Werke sell it at the prevailing market price to the armament industry, the difference between market price and costs of production being paid for by the state, that is chiefly by the masses of the people. The new Zellwolle (staple fibre) factories are subsidised by the state as long as they do not return profits. Crops have to be delivered to the state in order to regulate food consumption so as to import as little food and as much armament raw materials as possible. The freedom of many capitalists, even of large capitalists, is infringed in favour of the armament capitalists. Textile trusts are treated almost like an ordinary small capitalist enterprise, the chocolate trusts suffer from labour shortage, thousands of small craftsmen are forced into bankruptcy, and all this is done in order to improve still further the position of the armament industries.

Fascism implies rule of, by, and for, the most reactionary part of finance capital; it implies rule of, by, and for, the armament and semi-armament industries. They have first claim on the economic and political machinery and therefore it is peculiarly they who control the state. Before fascism came to power the state served the various interests of the textile trusts, the food trusts, the tobacco trusts, as well as, the iron and steel trusts, the big banks, the big agrarians, etc. To-day under fascism, the state is especially the instrument of the most reactionary part of finance capital—of the heavy industries, the armament, the iron and steel, the chemical, and the construction trusts.

This most reactionary part of finance capital runs the economic system for its own ends so that not only the masses of people are exploited and plundered, so that not only the small craftsmen and shopkeepers and the small employers have to pay tribute, but the employers outside the heavy industries also have to submit to a certain clipping of their privileges and contribute part of their profit collection to the armament industry.

Changes in the Structure of Finance Capital Under Fascism

This predominance of one part of finance capital over the whole of economy (including some trusts and

monopolies) has brought about certain changes in the character of capitalist society. If the state as instrument of government is mainly at the disposal of the armament industries the role of the banks, for instance, becomes of minor importance. Before fascism came into power the banks were in a way the partners of the big industrialists; to-day, in Germany the banks have become the cashiers, or even functionaries of still minor importance of the armament industry; for the state has taken over the business of financing the armament industries, it gives them all the necessary credit facilities and makes the investments, considered necessary by the armament industrialists, etc. The freedom of investment, of the disposal of products of the buying and selling of raw materials, is taken away from many employers. In many respects the employers have become increasingly officials in a state-regulated business. This is true even of employers in the semi-armament industries and in the armament industries themselves. Even Krupp and Thyssen and their brother monopolists could easily be replaced to-day in their business by a state official. And yet capitalism, the profit motive, and the private ownership of capital, are still effective. For to-day Krupp and Thysen and their brother monopolists are state rulers. Their economic basis is still their business enterprise. But their platform is the state. And they rule the state in such a way that their business flourishes. They are motivated by the lust for higher and higher profits, they own the means of production, the use of which is necessary for the extraction of surplus value from the workers. But the position of many other employers has changed in certain respects. In many ways they have become functionaries and nothing more; they have not become rulers of Germany like Krupp, Thyssen and others. Their freedom as employers has been curtailed, indeed, just as fifty years ago the freedom of many small employers was curtailed by the big cartels and trusts. In fascist Germany to-day many a trust chairman presiding over a civilian undertaking is in the position of the small employer of fifty years ago. A force, economically considerably stronger than he himself, is reducing his freedom to exploit and plunder, and, in addition, robs him of a considerable part of his profits.

The rise of the armament monopolists to absolute power has led to a two-fold development of monopolisation in general. On the one hand, it has led to a large increase of the holdings of the armament and semi-armament monopolists, who have taken over many a firm in the old Reich and who have made large gains by absorbing many Austrian and Sudetan firms. On the other hand, the general process of monopolisation has been stopped. During the first year of fascist rule many new cartels and trusts and monopolies had been formed or were in the process of being formed. They have almost all been dissolved again. And this is quite natural. For the monopolists have the advantage of getting super profits, that is of robbing the other capitalists of part of their profits. The more monopolies exist the more capitalists tend to get super profits and the less extra profits can go to the individual monopolist; for monopolisation does not create more profits, it only changes their distribution. The fewer the monopolies the higher their super profits. It is understandable, therefore, that late in 1933 the old

monopolies began a campaign against this general spread of the monopolisation process, and within a short time they had dissolved the newly-formed trusts and cartels and monopolies.

Fascism and Crisis

There is one final question of importance which must be dealt with here. If German Fascist economy is still capitalist, does this simply imply that it is governed also by the law of cyclical crises as developed in Marx's *Capital* or has this law been modified? It has not been modified. German fascist economy is also governed by the law of over-production crises. The crisis of 1929-32 had reached its lowest point already before Hitler came into power. When Hitler moved to the chancellery, production already had risen to 10 per cent., above the lowest point, the official index of sensitive commodity prices had increased already by 20 per cent., and the index of stock exchange prices had even gone up by 30 per cent. Fascist economy had nothing to do with the beginning of the increase of business activity after the low point of the crisis had been reached.

But what about the next crisis? How is over-production possible if more and more goods (armament goods) are produced only when ordered. This problem seems at first quite perplexing. But it is easy to solve. Over-production means that while the purchasing power increases the production increases even more, and a crisis develops. This can easily happen also in the growing sphere of armament production where the state orders armaments. If the state gives armament orders larger than what it can pay for from revenues, it has to borrow more and more, and if it can no longer borrow enough it has to print the money. Therefore, under fascism the cyclical crisis may begin in a "third sphere"—the armament sphere—and it may start in another way than under finance capitalism; "pure and simple" it may begin as a financial crisis, in the form of an inflation, but the underlying cause of the crisis, over-production, remains the same.

Fascist economy is capitalist economy. It is not a new stage of capitalism, it is not a new period following upon that of finance capitalism or imperialism, it is only a special form of finance capitalism, of imperialism. It is evolved and used by a certain section of finance capitalism under certain historical circumstances. To put it briefly, it is an expedient adopted by the ruling class, but not a stage in the development of capitalism like imperialism.

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ON THE ROAD TO REFORMISM

(A Critique of Comrade Patwardhan's essay in Revising Socialist Policy)

By G. Adhikari

The Thesis

Sometime back Comrade Achyut Patwardhan published an article in the *Congress Socialist* under the headline "*On the Road to Socialism.*" In this he pleaded for the "need for a restatement of Policy." The startling theses put forward in this article were as follows :—

(1) "We should frankly accept Gandhiji as one who has worked out a more effective and humane method of Social ideals.

(2) "Gandhiji continues to broaden the scope of this method.

(3) "It will be possible for both Gandhism and Socialism in India to evolve in such a way as to make an ultimate blending and synthesis of the two possible."

Even a naive in Socialism who derives the knowledge of his first principles from Comrade Jaiprakash Narain's "Why Socialism" ought to be shocked to read these formulations in cold print in the organ of his Party. Ordinarily, it would have been hardly worthwhile to pay any heed to this and treat it as an individual aberration. But this is not so. This is not merely a personal view. Comrade Patwardhan assures us that "some others among those who have played a part in founding and building up our Party think on similar lines."

Not a New One

Comrade Patwardhan has for the first time put on paper these views which have found casual expression both in the organ of the Party and in the conversation of the C.S.P. leadership. Sometime back Comrade Masani wrote in the *Congress Socialist* condemning the executions of the Trotskyist plotters. He drew the attention of Gandhiji to the *Congress Socialist's* attitude towards the use of "violence" even in the land of Soviets. Comrade Masani rejects the use of violence even against the proved enemies of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and of Socialism. Then again quite recently, the *Congress Socialist* surprised us by joining in the Gandhist chorus of the condemnation of "the orgy of violence indulged in by the mob at Ramdurg" (*Congress Socialist* dated 16-4-'39). Have the comrade editors of the *Congress Socialist* begun now to place the violence of a people in revolt against age long inhuman tyranny on the same level as the violence of the exploiter? Have they exchanged the round scientific analysis of Marxism for the divining rod of abstract ethics?

This is certainly true in the case of Comrade Patwardhan. What argument does he bring forward in support of the "theses" which he has formed? He does not even make the pretence of using or distorting Marxism to prove his proposition. His arguments in favour of

the efficacy of the peaceful method in effecting Social transformation are the usual ethical ones. "The choice of good means" (peaceful mass action) morally isolates the oppressor-comraderie etc.—these are brought forward in defence of the "synthesis of Socialism and Gandhism."

Patwardhan vs. Jai Prakash

At the outset let us tell Comrade Patwardhan that his new discovery that Gandhiji has found a new humane method of social transformation, came ong after Comrade Jayprakash Narain's treatment of the subject in his "Why Socialism?" Let us quote for his benefit:-

"Gandhiji's views are essentially what in Socialist history is known as reformism. Its language is Indian but its substance is international. The chief interest of reformism lies in maintaining the established order of society—Reformism is intended not in securing social justice but in covering up the ugly fissures of Society." (*Why Socialism—pp. 87*).

Comrade Patwardhan may argue that he recognises Gandhism as reformism. He has in fact stated that Gandhiji rejects "the abolition of private property." He admits that the Gandhians "avoid a recognition of the reality of the class struggle and the necessity of taking up a decisive stand with the exploited against the exploiters. "Neutrality in class-conflicts often makes the Gandhians throw their weight on the wrong side." We may put the argument of Comrade Achyut thus:—"We reject the reformism—the anti-class struggle bias of Gandhism. But Gandhiji has developed a *new technique* of peaceful mass action which is *morally superior*. This method can be developed into dynamic class struggle. It would be possible to "make peaceful mass action an adequate vehicle for realising Socialism."

Discarded Reformism

The argument is strikingly similar to that of the reformist social democrats who paid lip sympathy to Marxian Socialism and class-struggle and pinned their faith in a peaceful evolution to Socialism. The Revisionists of the type of Bernstein and Reformists like Karensky all "recognised class-struggle". What they did not recognise was the need for the exploited classes to use force against the oppressors when the critical moment favourable for Social transformation arrived. The transition from Capitalism to Socialism presupposes *revolutionary action of the proletariat organising itself as the state* (Communist Manifesto). This presupposes the forcible overthrow of the bourgeois state, based on organised violence. *Without the organisation of the state in the form of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, capable of coercing the remnants of the defeated capitalist class—there can be no transition towards socialism.* This is elementary Marxism.

The abstract ethical argument against the use of force is not new. It is as old as Dr. Durhing who said that it demoralises the person who uses it. Engels has answered it, and his Anti-Durhing "Force", says Engels quoting Marx, "is the midwife of every old society which is pregnant with the new. It is the instrument with whose aid social movement forces its way through and shatters the dead, fossilised political forms." "All illusions about the peaceful transition to Socialism have been based on the non-recognition of the real nature of the State, as an organ of

class-violence. To accept class-struggle and to reject the Marxian theory of State and its forceful overthrow is to reject Marxism." "To limit Marxism" said Lenin "to the teaching of the class-struggle means to curtail Marxism—to distort it. A Marxist is one who extends the acceptance of class-struggle to the acceptance of the *Dictatorship of the Proletariat.*" To postulate that "peaceful mass can be an adequate vehicle for realising socialism" is to reject the Marxist-Leninist theory of State—is to reject Marxism itself.

The Ethical Argument

Let us turn to the ethical argument about the choice of good means. What measuring rod do we apply to find out whether the means are good or bad. Are we to use the test of abstract idealist ethics or the test of Marxism? Comrade Patwardhan uses the former. The scientific and objective test of the means has to be: *how far they are effective in shifting the balance of class struggle in favour of the progressive class and against the exploiting and reactionary one.* It is not a question of rejecting all peaceful methods of struggles *per se.* At certain elementary stages of struggle, peaceful methods enable the growth of the strength and power of the exploited class and makes the retreat of the exploiting class possible. In these circumstances, these methods can be said to be "good means." But to reject the use of force and violence *per se,* because of abstract ethical principles is *to reject Socialism itself.*

Lenin on "Violence"

Let us get the fundamentals clear. There is no question of realising Socialism without overthrowing the social and economic structure of capitalism. This cannot be done unless an assault is made on that organised body of force and violence—the bourgeois State—which keeps that structure together, which defends it at every stage by the use of violence against the exploited. The inevitablity of violent revolution with reference to the bourgeois state is the essence of the teachings of Marx and Engels. Lenin has stressed the point in his "State and Revolution". Lenin asks us to remember the concluding passages of the "Poverty of Philosophy" and the "Communist Manifesto" with its proud and open declaration of the inevitability of violent revolution. Lenin concludes:

> "The necessity of systematically fastering among the masses *this* and this point of view about violent revolution lies at the root of the *whole* of Marx and Engel's teaching. The neglect of such propaganda and agitation by both the present predominant social-chauvinist and Kautskyist currents brings their betrayal of Marx and Engel's teaching into prominent relief" (State and Revolution, Indian Edition, pp. 28).

My purpose in quoting the classics on the issue of the role of force and violence in the transition to Socialism is to clarify the fundamentals. In fighting for Socialism you must be prepared to fight against the violence and force which will be used by the exploiting class to defend its class-domination. The choice of violence or force as means of conducting this fight successfully is forced upon us by the oppressor. To refuse to counter the brute force of the oppressor—who wants to perpetuate conditions and social relations which have become a fetter on the free growth of society—is to capitulate and rid the forces of Evil. The organised and disciplined violence

of the revolutionary class has a progressive role to play. It is morally justifiable. To Judge from abstract and idealistic ethical forms, to maintain like Herr Duhring that force is an absolute evil and that the first act of force is the original sin may be good theosophy but not Marxism.

Peaceful Struggle—When Progreasive ?

We have put Comrade Achyut's alleged new discovery of making "peaceful mass action an adequate vehicle for realising Socialism" to the test of Marxian theory. We find that it is the same old reformist "theory" in Indian trappings. [It may be asked, what about the role of peaceful mass action in furthering the present phase of our struggle ? Nobody will deny that peaceful resistance initiated by Gandhiji has played a progressive role. It has unified the people of India in their resistance to British Imperialism. It was a progressive step, not because it adjured force and violence but because it led the people forward from passive submission to mass resistance. The technique of peaceful mass action in as much as it plays a progressive role is in essence a form of *material* coercion of the enemy. If we carefully examine the various forms of mass satyagraha resorted to in the two non-co-operation campaigns, we will find that they represent a particular method of using force against the enemy. At a stage when the masses have not yet awakened to the consciousness and to the need of collectively fighting the oppressors—is not yet prepared to make sacrifices in this fight—this form of resistance is suited to lead them on towards that path.

Imperialism has always opposed the peaceful mass-action of Gandhiji just for this reason. Their stock argument was that the Civil Disobedience Campaign, in spite of the high ethical principles which guide its author, always leads to "anarchy." What they meant was that the practice of mass satyagraha leads the masses from the stage of object-passive submission to that of political consciousness and fearless resistance to imperialism. It becomes a stage in preparing the masses towards the stage when disciplined mass force is to be used against the oppressor.

Has Gandhiji Developed It?

But can we say that Gandhiji is developing the weapon in this sense? Not in the least. On the other hand, the history of the civil disobedience movement reveals that Gandiji has always tried to restrict and narrow down the scope of the movement in the measure the consciousness and the fighting capacity of the people has grown. He has been steadily moving away from methods involving mass mobilisation to mothods of individual satyagraha. Even mass satyagraha has been so modified that it has become a check to the development of mass struggle ("barring of secrecy" in the C.D. movement jail-filling campaign, refusal to protect leading cadres and presserve the continuity of leadership etc). It has been his favourite claim that because of his "unique" method he is able to stand between Imperialism and the revolution. To-day in the face of the collosal growth of political consciousness and activity of the masses, Gandhiji is trying to shut off even the prospect of a mass satyagraha against the hated Constitution. In the British provinces, he pins his faith over "the experiment of office acceptance" through which he hopes to avoid mass stayagraha. Even

the case of States Peoples' Struggle, where he was forced to allow the use of the weapon of mass satyagraha, because of the logic of the developing revolt of the people against age-long and obsolete oppression, he has now abjured the struggle. In his latest article on Ramdurg, Gandhiji states:

> "It is a clear warning to all workers in the field, and everyone must realise that before one feels sure that the people are rightly trained and disciplined in non-violence it is unwise to begin any great mass movement."

A Technique of Restricting Struggle

The present position of Gandhiji is "no mass movement until the Congress ranks are purged of violence in thought word and deed.". To postulate that "Gandhiji continues to broaden the scope of this method," is a travesty of facts. Even in its early phases the "technique of non-violent resistance" was essentially *a technique of restricting the action of the masses to safe channels.* Its ideological roots may be traced to pre-capitalist religions and philosophical ideas in India. But it caught on India for two reasons. Firstly it was eminently suited to the needs and the role of the class which formed the basis of the leadership of our National struggle—viz. the Indian bourgeoisie. Secondly, it could play the role of mobilising the backward masses against imperialism in the primitive stages of our movement. To-day the mass movement in India has reached a stage of political consciousness and consolidation when the enforcement of the so-called non-violent technique upon it has become a fetter. Once non-violent satyagraha was a method of *developing* mass activity on safe lines (first non-co-operation movement). Later it became a technique of restricting the mass movement which had gathered its own momentum (Second C. D. Movement—recent States Peoples struggles). To-day the *slogan* of "Non-violence in word, thought and deed" is sought to be used to *prevent* the starting of any struggle at all and to emasculate the Congress as a fighting instrument.

Non-Violence and National Unity

It may be argued that the National Congress has accepted non-violence as its sole method of winning independence and that to reject it and to criticise it would cut us away from the large mass of Congress. A Socialist once seriously argued with me that we must *positively* popularise Non-violence in the interest of the united national front. Firstly, let us not forget that the National Congress seeks to attain independence by peaceful and legitimate means. This is a limitation explicit in the exigencies of the present situation in India. But what united the National Congress *is its political objective of complete independence.* The Congress has not as yet adopted the Gandhian interpretation of "Non-violence in word, thought and deed" as a restriction on its political activity. It is the task of the leftists and of all consistent anti-imperialists in the Congress to lay the stress on the political objective and programme of the Congress. To raise the issue of non-violence in the way Com. Patwardhan has done it, is the surest way to strengthen the hands of those who want to use "Non-violence", to restrict the base of the Congress and to prevent any struggle altogether. To raise the issue of the ethical value of non-violence is to divide

the Congress. It is well known that an overwhelming majority of Congressmen do not believe in Gandhiji's interpretation of non-violence. They are not prepared to place the adherence to the abstract ethical principle above the needs of the struggle for independence. It is wrong to say that unless we fight against the "creed of non-violence" and get it removed it is impossible for us to achieve the political programme of independence through the Congress. (Roy's position). It is equally wrong to go to the opposite oppositio and to maintain that it is essential to make a positive propaganda in favour of non-violence to preserve the united front. Both these paths would lead to disruption of national unity.

Non-Violence and Socialist Unity

But the most dangerous implication of Comrade Patwardhan's thesis is the blow it would deliver to socialist unity. In fact, this seems to be the underlying objective of his stand. In the concluding paragraph of his article, he has raised the issue of the international affiliation. Are we to chose "the parliamentarianism of the Social Democrats or the insurrection, opportunism and authoritarianism of the Communists?" This is how he poses the question! Comrade Patwardhan is supposed to know enough about socialist theory to enable him to see that Communist policy is *not* "insurrectionist" nor "opportunist" nor is it "authoritarian". But the use of these three adjectives is significant. When he condemns the Communist policy as "insurrectionist" he rejects the Marxist-Leninist policy of the violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie and of the forceful destruction of the bourgeois state. By using the word, "opportunist" he signifies his rejection of the policy of the popular front, and finally by damning it as "authoritarian" he rejects the Marxist conception of "democratic centralism." By applying these adjectives to communist policy he has shown that he rejects Marxism-Leninism—and accepts the reformism and the gradualism of the Social democrats. The conclusion is clear in his own words. "Our Party shares its socialist objective with other socialist and communist groups in the country and faith in peaceful means with the Gandhians." Therefore he thinks that his Party "cannot identify itself with anyone of them without abridging the possibility of developing along its chosen path of Socialism through peaceful mass action."

I am afraid Comrade Achyut is already anticipating a decision in favour of this thesis. But as far as I am aware the Congress Socialist Party has not as yet "chosen the path of Socialism through peaceful mass action." However Comrade Patwardhan has chosen the path, which is one of rejecting Marxism and of accepting the outworn reformism of the Social democrats and Labourites. He makes this choice the basis of his rejection of unity with the Communists. I am sure Comrade Patwardhan and those who "think on similar lines" are over-optimistic. The overwhelming majority of Congress Socialists will I am certain reject this effort to lead the party on to the road to Reformism and to disunity in the Socialist ranks.

(*Continued From Page 534*)

We advocate the strengthening of the Kisan Sabhas and their collective affiliation to the Congress.

Here are two distinct lines.

Inspite of its predominant peasant composition the Congress is dominated by the bourgeoisie. Roy says that the rural Congress. Committees must actively participate in the day-to-day struggles of the peasantry, must become organs of anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolution. Yes, they should, but they have not done it so far. Why? Because the professional classes who control most of the higher Congress organs (from the District Congress Committees upwards) are either closely linked with the rural vested interests or have mistaken ideas about "national solidarity." Mere agitation inside Congress ranks will not isolate the conscious supporters of vested interests, will not win over those honest elements, who do not yet realise the democratic political character of the peasant movement. For *actual peasant movement*, mass mobilisation of peasants is needed. This movement must be developed on an all-India scale. The Kisan Sabhas came into existence precisely because such a peasant movement could not develop within the frame-work of the Congress. They represented a historic necessity. They were not created by mischivous anti-Congress elements who wanted to set up rival bodies to the Congress. They were the organisational form of the developing Kisan consciousness, of the rising tide of Kisan struggle. And when the Kisan movement has reached a high level, when the development of the movement has convinced the other sections of the anti-imperialist masses that the Kisan movement is an integral part of the national liberation struggle, the Kisan Sabhas will become integral parts of the National Congress through collective affiliation.

Through peasant movement the rural Congress organisations will be transformed into organs of anti-imperialist agrarian revolt. To develop this movement we need Kisan Sabhas. That is our line.

Persuade Congress Committees to participate in the day-to day struggles of the peasants. When you have convinced them of this necessity through pursuation alone, *then* launch the Kisan movement through them. That is Roy's line.

Who is Right ?

Let us take a concrete example. In Bengal the Congress is very weak among the peasants—in 1928 the Swaraj Party voted with the landlords *against* the tenants. How to change the character of the Bengal Congress so that it may definitely turn its face towards the peasantry and acquire mass peasant support? The Bengal peasantry is seething with discontent. The Congress because of its class character is unable to-day to harness this discontent and direct it into anti-imperialist channels. In the absence of an organised Kisan Sabha, the discontent is bound to either fritter away in sporadic acts of violence or be utilised by communal reactionaries for anti-national purposes. This is precisely what happened in the past. It is only during the last two years that intensive Kisan Sabhas work by radical congressmen, has freed the peasantry to some extent from communalist influence and brought them under national influence.

The Right Winger in Bengal Congress would say, "The Congress is a national body. It has nothing to do with anti-landlord movement. No Congressman should join such a movement." Roy would say, "Liquidate the Kisan Sabhas *first*. Try to make the Congress take up the peasant struggle. As long as you have not succeeded in this, do not give the struggle an organised character." He would not tell us what to do with the *existing* peasant movement, through what organ to lead them.

Both lines in reality are one and the same. Both result in hampering the growth of the peasant movement which alone can transform the character of the Congress.

It may be argued by Roy, 'Then why have Kisan Sabhas in those places where the Congress is Left? It is quite true that in some districts the Congress organisations are sufficiently free from the in-

fluence of vested interests. Such Congress organisations would be assets in the struggle for the transformation of the Congress. They would demonstrate that the national character of the Congress does not suffer by its championing boldly the cause of the peasants. On the contrary it secures a broader base. But even in these places we do need Kisan Sabhas, because the Kisan movement to be able to influence the *entire* Congress and accelerate its radicalisation must be developed on a national scale.

The two parts of our programme, greater identification of the Congress with the peasant struggles and development of Kisan Sabhas, are not contradictory to each other as Roy thinks. On the contrary they are complementary. The Kisan movement cannot develop without the active support and co-operation of Congressmen. The *entire* Congress cannot be influenced and transformed without a powerful Kisan movement. Both items together constitute an integral programme to develop the Congress (with affiliated Kisan Sabhas) into the leader of the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal revolution.

This is precisely what is happening before our very eyes. The concrete fact that the peasant movement is growing—the rising militancy of the peasantry, the ever-widening orbit of actual agrarian struggle—is inevitably pushing the Congress to the Left and making it identify itself more and more with the peasant-struggles. But the process is not yet complete. To liquidate Kisan Sabhas would mean weakening the Kisan movement, and thereby arrest the leftward trend of the Congress itself.

Roy and Trade Unions

The same mechanical approach vitiates Roy's outlook regarding Trade Unions. He would deny the Trade Unions the right to initiate political action, the right to develop political strikes—except when the Congress wants such a strike.

The Trade Unions in India because of the absence of a legal political mass working class party have inevitably to fulfil a dual function. They give the call for working class participation in political actions—political strikes, political demonstrations; they also lead the battle for economic amelioration—against wage cuts, against retrenchments etc. That is how the militant trade unions—the one tribunal of the workers to which they look for lead—have grown for political as well as economic actions.

By denying the political role of Trade Unions, Roy denies political action by the working class. To-day in the seven Congress provinces the Congress organisations are being more and more reduced to a position subordinate to the Ministries. Since the acceptance of office *not one* all-India political demonstration was organised by the High Command to protest against specific acts of Imperialist and State terrorism against the people. Not that there were no occasions for such protests. Haren Munshi laid down his life in Bengal jail. Workers in Chirala who demanded bred were greeted with bullets. 36 Peasant were shot down by the Mysore Government for the crime of honouring the National Flag. The High Command sat silent or at best protested in mild terms.

This is no mere accident. The High Command does not want to-day any form of anti-imperialist mass action, even mass demonstration, particularly in Congress provinces. Even when bureaucratic intrasigent forced the Ministries of U.P. and Behar to resign, the call was not given for national protest.

Roy regrets this drift. Yet he would discountenance the actions and the growth of forces that alone can stop the drift. Was the Sholapur Girni Kamgar Union wrong in organising protest strike to demand the release of political workers? Roy would say—"Yes, because the Trade Union is not a political body. The local or provincial or All-India Congress ought to have given the call!"

The Congress cannot give the call for political mass action unless the forces of the left gather greater strength within it. And the independent political action of the proletariat is one of the most powerful levers to radicalise the rank and file Congressmen and facilitate this growth of Left forces.

Propaganda within the Congress is not enough. It has to be combined with mass action. Experience tells us that mass action is the surest form of propaganda. Even these elements who would not be otherwise influenced, participate in the action when it actually takes place, through which they get radicalised and a big step is taken towards radicalising the entire Congress.

Roy denies the role of conscious proletarian mass action—for him such action means weakening the national front, transgressing beyond the limits of 'pure' trade-Unionism, encroaching upon the monopoly of the Congress to lead political struggles.

We demand the collective affiliation of trade unions to the Congress, a political organisation, because we are conscious of the dual role that trade unions perform to-day. The proletariat steeled through the day-to-day struggle, will be an active galvanising force within the Congress, fighting irreconcilably against any attempt to compromise with imperilism or the anti-national vested interests.

This dynamic development of the Congress into the People's Front against imperialism, through mass movement, through mass radicalisation by action, has no place in Roy's perspective. Everything for him is fixed and pre-determined. "The Congress is the People's Party, the Trade Unions are economic organisations, the Kisan Sabhas are useles. The first thing to do is to abolish the Kisan Sabhas and to confine Trade Union activities within the economic sphere, carry on propaganda within the Congress and it will become the leader and organiser of the Anti-imperialist, agrarian revolution!" That is all. All that is needed is to rave against the Right Wing leadership, call it incompetent and muddle-headed or at best to formulate eleborate schemes regarding the organisational structure of the Congress (See Roy's resolution at Haripura).

Only complete break with Marxism and complete isolation from the struggle that are already on, can result in such mechanical evaluation, liquidationist tactics and lifeless schemes. No wonder the Left wing has contemptously rejected Roy's formulas. Life has proved their dangerous reactionary character.

THE COMMUNAL BOULDER

By S. Mahmudazzafar

[We print the following article for diacussion. We invite comments on the formulations made in the article as well as the tactic suggested to solve the Communal problem.—*Ed.*]

The last two years have witnessed an astonishing growth of political consciousness and organisation amongst the masses of our people; these years have also even an unprecedented rise in the power and prestige of our national organisation, the Indian National Congress. The Congress Governments have managed to give the people a measure of civil liberties, social improvement and economic relief far surpassing previous efforts in those directions. But at the same time this very forward and upward process has liberated antagonistic, retrogressive forces. One of these, and perhaps the most important, is the separatist movement now developing so fast amongst the Muslims of this country.

League-Congress Negotiations Break Down

Last year efforts were renewed, on behalf of the Congress, to come to some understanding with the Muslim League (the prime mover of these separatist tendencies) and its President, Mr. Jinnah. The attempts ended in complete failure last December. Mr. Jinnah and the League refused to continue any

negotiations, until the Congress first agreed to the proposition that the Muslim League was the only political organisation of the Muslims. Since the Congress could not accept a proposition, which had not reality in fact, further talks were thought useless.

Since then the League leadership has gone forward with its own programme on an intensified scale. The Patna Session of the League, and more recently the U. P. Provincial League Conference at Gorakhpur, the League Working Committee meeting at Meerut, and Mr. Jinnah's speeches and actions in the Central Assembly can leave no doubt in anyone's mind as to the intentions of the League leaders.

Why the League Revived

Up to the time of the acceptance of offices by the Congress these leaders were not very seriously perturbed by the national movement, because this did not in any very direct way interfere with their lives, their privileges or their leaderships. But now when the Congress has set itself to work on the Parliamentary front, they have found that it is a menace, that it is dislodging them, that it is encroaching on what they considered to be their eternal preserves. It is now and only now, since the rise of the Congress Ministries, that the leaders have begun to stir themselves, and it is obvious, from a glance at their speeches or their resolutions, that these leaders have thought mainly in terms of Parliamentary groupings, Parliamentary politics.

Deprived of posts and positions in the new Governments, threatened on the Zamindaries and taluqdaries by the new Congress legislation, afraid lest mass education and mass organisatin should rouse their tenants against them, afraid of losing their traditional hold over the urban lower middle class population, they are taking to religious separatism as a basis for building up their own mass organisation. And for this they are exploiting every incident, every interest hostile to the national movement and the Congress Parliamentary programme. The general political backwardness, and extreme poverty and age-long suppression of the Muslim masses by the British Imperialism work to their advantage.

Tactics and Slogans

The tactic of these leaders is to canalise the tremendous mass political energy released, to the task of creating an unbridgable gulf of estrangement between the Muslim masses and their Hindu brethren (in order to ensure these Muslim masses as their own preserves for exploitation), of bringing a speedy end to Congress Governments, of ending Congress activity in the Indian States, of paralysing Congress action in opposition to the Federation. In this, these reactionary interests are supported (though from the other angle) by their Hindu counterparts, the Bhai Parmanands, Moonjes, Savarkars, J. P. Srivastavas. For the Hindu reactionaries it is far harder to find mass support, as the Hindu masses are already politically alert and for the most part follow the Congress. But the Muslims can work in practically virgin soil.

Two or three elementary formulations have been evolved and these form the basis and the body of the Muslim League propaganda. The daily conduct of the Congress Governments and the Congress organisation are interpreted in the light of these formulations. These formulations are as follows:

1. That the Congress is an organisation of the Hindu capitalist class, which is working hand in glove with British Imperialism in order to squeeze out the maximum concessions for itself from Imperialism.

2. That the Congress has an ulterior motive in pressing for domocratic government in this country, because it knows that any system of rule by majorities will ensure power permanently in the hands of the Hindus.

3. That the Congress has an ulterior motive in pressing for national culture and a national language and education in as much as it knows that in this way it can completely obliterate the separate identity of the Muslims, and take them into its own fold of Hinduism.

4. That Hindus and Muslims are no only different in religion, but completely

different in race, that Indian Muslims are not a separate religious entity only but a separate religious race of 90 million souls.

5. That the British have betrayed the Indian Muslims and Muslims elsewhere (as in Palestine) by trying to hand them over to other communities, and that, therefore, the Muslims can have nothing to do with British Imperialism.

6. That the Muslim League is the only organisation of the Muslims, while the Congress is a Hindu organisation.

These are some of the chief formulations of the Muslim League leaders. We can see at a glance that all of them contain an element of truth, but at the same time an element of untruth. They are, in fact based on half truths. But when half-truths are given out as truths, and especially when they are fitted to facts (by a consistant suppression of other parts which would contradict the first) and served up in a semi-religious garb to an impoverished politically backward people, we can understand what enormous popularity they begin to acquire.

The Gorakhpur Conference

The Gorakhpur Muslim League Conference was an eye-opener to me in this respect. Nawab of Mahammad Ismail Khan's Presidential address, the majority of the resolutions, and all the speeches, trotted out these half-truths, and got away with them. An audience of six or seven thousand—peasants, artisans, wretched clerks and menials—listened spell-bound and applauded *equally* the attacks on Hindus, on the Congress, *and on the British Imperialism.*

Let us have a glance at the resolutions. They cover a wide field from a demand for Provincial Autonomy in Baluchistan, condemnation of the Congress Government of U. P. for having failed to stop communal riots, rejection of the British Federal scheme, rejeceion of the idea of Constituent Assembly, qualified support of the States peoples' struggle, demand for drastic legislation to wipe out indebtedness, to the resolution to carry out relief work for Muslim sufferers from rioting and building up a strong National Guard, "to be fully prepared to take effective part in the struggle against British Imperialism and its allies for the independence of India and the protection of their rights." Perhaps the most important resolution of all was the one suggesting an alternative to the British Federal scheme.

Unequivocal Opposition to Congress

From the tone and wording of the resolutions it appears that the League leadership is perfectly clear about its opposition to the Congress and the methods to bring this opposition into effect. "Whereas it is a political principle," says one of the resolutions, "that wherever the Government of the country is partial and issues orders encouraging a particular community, such as the Congress circular did, it is natural that the officers of the Government may become partial to the community, as has been the case. This Session condemns the Congress circular and any other such circular that might have been issued, especially when the community is obsessed with the idea of superiority and is deliberately hostile to the Muslim community. This Conference urge the Muslims to observe a day as anti-Government day."

Concessions Without Mass Struggle

But the same consistent antagonism is not reflected in the League attitude towards British Imperialism. For instance the resolution on Baluchistan, condemns the British Government for failure to grant provincial autonomy to that Province, and requests the All India Muslim League to take all possible steps to achieve that object, while the very next resolution, on the Federal scheme rejects the scheme and requests the All-India Muslim League to devise ways to counteract it and get it recast." From these two resolutions it appears that the Muslim League leadership is also anxious (it maintains that the Congress is anxious for the same thing) to extract concessions from British Imperialism. It is also clear from the operative clauses of the resolutions *that the leaders have not visualised the necessity of mass struggle to*

gain concessions from British Imperialism: they leave it to the Working Committee of the League to do all the needful. This is true of almost all the resolutions.

Why is it that the leadership failed to lay down a specific programme of mass struggle? Why is it that the leaders merely create an atmosphere of popular fanatical enthusiasm and communal estrangement without clearly saying how the Muslim massess are to get relief from their burdens? Why is it that the necessity for Muslim unity and Muslim mass organisation and discipline (Nawab Ismail stressed the need for discipline especially) are vaguely hinted at, without laying down a day-to-day programme of mass work? Why is it that the Congress is railed at for having suppressed democracy—while democracy is practically non-existant and sometimes openly condemned as anti-Islamic on the Muslim League platform?

The answer is that the Muslim League is at present in the hands of classes that are afraid of democracy, afraid of mass organisation, afraid of mass struggle. Whoever can imagine the Nawab of Chattari or Nawab Mohammad Yusaf or Sir Sikhandar Hyat leading a mass movement against Imperialism?

We Must Revise Our Attitude

The time has come, however, to revise our attitude entirely towards the Muslim League, as a whole. It is an undeniable fact that the League has grown in numbers and in influence, amongst broad sections of the Muslim masses. It is an undeniable fact that strong separatist tendencies are now growing even amongst the peasants and the workers (to-day nothing of the middle class youth) which seriously threaten to hold up our anti-imperialist struggle. It is no longer any good calling the League names (reactionaries, etc.,) and pretending that it has no future, because it has no mass programme to-day. As a matter of fact it is patently wrong to characterise the League to-day as a reactionary organisation, and the more we do so the more we shall drive the Muslim masses away from the anti-imperialist struggle.

The Muslim League is to-day a genuine mass organisation. The Muslim masses believe that they have to win their independence from British Imperialism and from Hindu Capitalism. It is our job to draw them into our struggle and clarify their political formulations. This cannot be done if we continue to insult the Muslim masses by calling them reactionaries, and counter-revolutionaries, if we continue to deny them the right to organise, if we continue to neglect their livelihood, their languages, their education, their culture.

Our Past Failures Responsible

Indeed if we look back upon the history of our national movement, we find that the rise of these fissiparous, separatist tendencies amongst the Muslims are very largely due to our failure to revolve a truly national, non-communal spirit and ideology in the Congress, in our failure to work amongst the Muslim masses and to draw them into the Congress, in our failure to inspire confidence and respect amongst them. Of course there is no doubt that reactionary vested interests—Princes, landlords, moneylenders, even a section of the capitalists—will raise their voices against our national organisation in the measure that sets going a genuinely anti-imperialist movement.. The wrath of the newly-taxed, Hindu, Christian, Parsi plutocrats to-day falls upon the Congress, no less than the wrath of the Muslim taluqdars. But these reactionaries would not have managed to find a footing amongst the masses, had we worked harder to educate the people and strengthen our organisation at its base.

Communalism the Biggest Brake On National Unity

To-day, the prime need of our people is national unity in order to launch an effective movement for complete independence from British Imperialism. As things stand communal tension acts as one of the biggest brakes—I do not mean

that the Congress did not draw up a national policy, but it failed to educate its own rank and file and often failed to carry out its own mandates, i.e. Muslim mass contact programme—and this brake on our national movement, aids the imperialists and their friends to exploit it to the utmost. But there is no short-cut to national unity. It can be achieved only if the essential causes of disunity are understood, and if the superstructure of communalism built up by the vested interest, is broken down.

We spoke of certain formulations of the Muslim League leadership. We said that they were built on half truths. We must also realise that there are formulations often used by Congressmen (even by Socialists) which are to-day equally half truths, one of which is that the Muslim League is a reactionary communal organisation. These formulations have to be given up, as a first step towards national unity, and it is only we, the Socialists and the Communists, who will and can take the initiative in this direction, because we understand most clearly the essential need for unity.

League Formulations Must Be Answered

The formulations of the Muslim League will be given up only when the Muslim masses see *concretely* that they are absolutely false. Thus, the first formulation can only be destroyed when the masses inside the Congress and in their separate class organisations make strenuous efforts to draw the Muslim masses into their day-to-day struggles *against* capitalists *against* landlords, *against* money-lenders, *against* princes, *against* imperialism. This means that on every possible occasion, *we* should approach *all* mass organisations, including the Muslim League, to join in with us, and even if the League leadership is hostile, we must carry on the work of approach to the rank and file. We should set up pressure *inside* the Muslim League, for joint work with us, and at the same time pressure *inside* the Congress for joint work with the Muslim League.

The second formulation will be dropped only when the Congress actually sees that the Muslim representation in every democratic organisation under its control is properly and justly maintained, when it actually fights for their proper representation in all services and Govt. posts, etc.

The third formulation will be falsified only when the Congress actually supports the preservation and propagation of Urdu on a mass scale for the Muslims, and encourages the education of this backward section of the people. If the Muslim people wish to keep their language and they can best develop through that medium, there should be no objection to that on our part. In fact we should welcome this growing demand for learning, culture and education. There is nothing to prevent our national objectives and Socialism being translated into Urdu, surely.

The fourth formulation, on the basis of which it is sought to divide our country into communal zones (see Dr. Latif's scheme and Pakistan) will be dropped when *we* encourage inter-communal intercourse, toleration for each other's customs and feelings and press forward with mass education which emphasises the common parenthood of the various ethnological groups, the common objectives of the various anti-imperialist classes of this country, and which finally develops a love of our motherland and a desire to improve every part of it, culturally, politically, socially and economically. We must endeavour to show the masses that mere shifting of populations, or handing administrations over to one set of capitalists and landlords is no guarantee of a better life *for them,* moreover that, the separation of the country into these zone blocks would in fact, involve greater economic burden for them, and lead to greater exploitation than before, besides making imperialist domination more secure than ever.

The fifth formulation can be met by the Congress actually supporting the Muslim masses wherever they are genuinely fighting against imperialism or its allies. For example, the struggle of the people of Baluchistan, the struggle of the Arabs, the struggle of the people of Kashmir, should receive

our active support, and *we should be prepared to chalk out a common* programme of agitation with the Muslim League. At the same time, by our adamant refusal to be drawn into bargains with imperialism, by our genuine support of Muslim interests, we should be able to dispel all suspicion and slanders about our ultimate intentions.

The sixth formulation can be met by our recognition of the right of the Muslims (or any other community) to work their own political organisations, by our willingness at all times, to negotiate with the Muslim League, our willingness to join up with it for any genuine anti-imperialist meeting, demonstration, agitation or struggle. We shall, of course, at the same time hold open the doors of the Congress, as before, to all people of all creeds and castes.

Is the Sacrifice Too great?

It may be objected that we are making too great a sacrifice, that we are pandering to reactionaries, that we shall let loose a bedlam of communalism if we follow this course. But let us clearly recognise the fact that at present there is a stalemate on the national front over this communal issue, and that while this stalemate continues, riotous reactionary forces are raising their ugly heads throughout the length and breadth of the land. British imperialism, Hitler and Mussolini, are making hay in this havoc, and our own forces are being demoralised. And all this at a time when we should be ready to strike, and strike hard, for our independence, our honour and our bread. The urgency of the situation requires the sacrifice of pride and prejudice and a statesmanlike realism. Our slogan must be: "Build up national unity." Our criterion in making adjustments and compromises must be: "Will this help in bringing the masses into the struggle?" Any barrier that stands in the way of this, however, hard it lies, must be immediately broken down.

Who Will Give the Lead?

Once more: the initiative will not be taken up by our opponents. We cannot wait for it to be taken by our own leadership, we must start out ourselves. We Socialists and Communists, all those who believe in the building of the United National Front must immediately chalk out our common line on the Communal question and attempt to popularise it and get it carried through in action by our national organisation and all organisations of the workers, peasants, and students, who are to-day built up on the national front. Comrades, communal disunity is the largest obstacle in the way of our anti-imperialist struggle, let us all put our shoulders together to remove it!

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